

STUDENTS' AND PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON MUSIC LEARNING IN HUNGARY

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Several music researchers pointed out the mistakes of Hungarian music education, which is unable to provide satisfactory musical experience, fun and variety for the pupils. Earlier studies showed that anxiety and apathy are often integral parts of music lessons as general emotional states which are partially due to the poor parental musical involvement and musical environment at home. On the other hand, previous studies cannot explain completely what factors are responsible for students' negative attitudes towards school music. To address this gap, the aims of the current empirical study are to determine the function and importance of music education in and out-of-school, among students and their parents, as well as to investigate parental influence on students' engagement with music in Hungary.

The sample included children (aged 10 to 15 years) and their parents. The children attended lower secondary grades; they studied either by the regular curriculum, or in classes with a special music emphasis. A questionnaire was administered to all participants. It had an open-ended question to elicit the respondents' opinion about the function and objectives of school based music instruction. In addition, Likert-type items targeted e.g. the home musical environment (number of musical instruments, shared musical activities like singing or playing music together, visiting or watching concerts together, etc.) or learning to play an instrument.

Results indicated that those children who took music in special music classes had a more favourable home musical environment than students of general classes, regarding collectively listening to music, singing, music making and concert attendance, except for watching music television channels. Also, they preferred music significantly both in and out-of-school as compared to students who received only one or two music lessons per week. Furthermore, obvious differences can be observed between children's and parents' responses. Although providing basic music knowledge and musical experiences are important for students, they perceived the beneficial effects of music learning on their development to a lesser extent than parents. In this study, effects of the specialization of classes and the home musical environment on students' positive attitudes toward music activities have been revealed.